

Serial No. 10/550,964
Art Unit 2609

PU030103
Customer No. 24498

Remarks

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application.

Claims 1-5 and 12-17 are rejected.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 6-8 and 10-11 are allowed and that claim 9 would be allowed if amended to overcome the informality objections.

Claims-3, 9 and 12-17 are currently amended. New claims 18 and 19 are added to further define present principles.

Reconsideration of the claim rejections is requested in view of the following remarks.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's consideration of the IDS submitted on 9/26/05.

Specification Objections

The Abstract of the disclosure was amended to address the objection raised on page 2 of the Office Action. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Claims Objections

Claims 3, 9, 13 and 14 have been amended to address informalities as suggested by the Examiner on pages 2-3 of the Office Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim objections is requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 101

Claims 12-17 are rejected as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejection, in the interest of cooperation, claims 12 and 13 have been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions to address the rejection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

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Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 103

The following obviousness rejections are asserted in the Office Action:

(1) Claims 1-3, 13, and 15 stand rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2002/0191572 to Weinstein et al. in view of U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2003/0115460 to Arai; and

(2) Claims 4-5 and 16-17 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Weinstein and Arai as applied to claims 1 and 13, and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2002/0046179 to Kokudo.

Applicants respectfully assert that the subject matter of claims 1 and 13 patentably distinguish over the combination of Weinstein and Arai. First, the combination of Weinstein and Arai does not disclose or fairly suggest a communications system including a plurality of access points that are associated with and controlled by a gateway, wherein *the gateway is configured (i) to maintain session information that currently exists for each wireless client connected to the wired network through an access point associated with the gateway, the session information including a session key associated with each wireless client and an associated access point, and (ii) to respond to a session information request from a given access point by providing that access point with currently existing session information, if any, maintained by the gateway for the wireless client requesting association with that access point, as claimed in claim 1*

Similarly, with regard to claim 13, the combination of Weinstein and Arai does not disclose or fairly suggest a computer readable medium encoded with instructions that are executable by a processor in a wireless access point in a network for the wireless access point device to perform a step of *communicating with a gateway connected to the network to obtain currently existing session information maintained by the gateway, if any, which is associated with the wireless client requesting association to the wireless access point, the session*

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information comprising a session key associated with the wireless client and an associated wireless access point, as claimed in claim 13.

In formulating the rejections for claims 1 and 13, the Examiner relies primarily on the teachings of Weinstein in FIGs. 3A and 7 as disclosing various features of the claimed subject matter. Although FIG. 3A of Weinstein illustrates a communications system comprising access points (300-n) and gateways (302, 325) which adopt and scheme for micro mobility between the access points (Col. 5, paragraphs [0050] and [00510]), such scheme is significantly different from than applicants' invention as recited in the amended claims.

In particular, Weinstein teaches a communications protocol in which all access points and gateways maintain and update FTN maps that include FEC entries for each mobile terminal having an assigned IP address in an associated PAMLAN network (see, FIG. 4, Col. 7, paras. [0070]-[0076]) In this scheme, each access point is equipped with MPLS and virtual LAN functionalities to support micro mobility among access points wherein the state of AAA controls are seamlessly transferred from an old access point to a new access point each time a mobile subscriber associates with a new access point using direct communication paths, i.e., MPLS Label Switched Paths (LSPs) between access points (see, Weinstein paras.[0061], [0109]-[0113], FIG. 4 (LSP (407) between access points AP1, AP2).

Moreover, the Examiner's reliance on FIG. 7 of Weinstein appears misplaced because FIG. 7 is specifically directed to an "authentication protocol" utilized to authenticate a mobile subscriber attempting to access a wireless network [see para. [0030] and in particular, the authentication sequence between a mobile terminal and a RADIUS server of a service provider (see para. [0094]. The protocol of FIG. 7 is not specifically related to a protocol to accomplish a fast and efficient handoff procedure between access points each time a mobile terminal proceeds to associate with a new access point from an old access point.

In view of the above, although Weinstein arguably teaches a communications system and method that allows a mobile terminal to associate with new access points in a network

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without repeating an authentication process, Weinstein does not teach a gateway that controls the access points and maintains currently existing session information for wireless clients associated with access point, wherein the access points operate, in the first instance, to query the controlling gateway upon receiving association requests from mobile terminal to access currently existing session information that may be maintained by the gateway to enable seamless roaming of a given wireless client among a plurality of access points associated with, and controlled by, the gateway. Unlike Weinstein, the present principles of the claimed subject matter provide a mechanism using *non-complex access points* controlled by a gateway, to ensure that session information travels with a wireless client from one access point to another without having to establish a new session or repeat authentication.

Moreover, there is no motivation for combining the teachings of Weinstein and Arai as suggested by the Examiner. Indeed, the Examiner contends on page 5 of the Office Action that it would have been obvious to modify Weinstein with the teachings of Arai to include means for an access point to receive and process session information setting commands from a gateway....to thereby facilitate management of roaming data. However, modification of Weinstein in this fashion would operate to change the basic fundamental principles of operation of the Weinstein communication system in which all access points are required to maintain session information for all mobile terminals so that access points can directly communication for session handoffs and to reroute packets to correct mobile terminal destinations. In this regard, the Weinstein communications system would not operate as intended if access points were controlled under commands by the gateway to remove relevant session information.

For at least the above reasons, claims 1 and 13 are patentable and non-obvious over the combination of Weinstein and Arai. Moreover, without further elaboration, claims 2, 3 and 15 are patentable over the combination of Weinstein and Arai at least by virtue of their dependence from claims 1 or 15. Furthermore, without elaboration, claims 4-5 and 16-17

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(which depend from claims 1 and 13) are believed to be patentable over the combination of Weinstein and Arai as applied to claims 1 and 13, and further in view of Kokudo for at least the same reasons given for claims 1 and 13

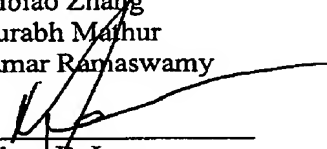
Withdrawal of the obviousness rejections is thus requested.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the accompany remarks, applicants solicit entry of this amendment and allowance of the claims. If, however, the Examiner believes such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's attorney at (609) 734-6820, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

Kindly charge and additional costs that may be due, or refund any overpayments to Deposit Account 07-0832.

Respectfully submitted,
Junbiao Zhang
Saurabh Mathur
Kumar Ramaswamy



Robert B. Levy
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 28, 234
609/734-6820

THOMSON Licensing Inc.
Patent Operation
PO Box 5312
Princeton, NJ 08543-5312

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